

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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R 161035Z DEC 76  
FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4187  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 1060

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PFOR, YO, UR  
SUBJECT: WELL-PLACED CROATIAN LEADER COMMENTS ON CURRENT  
POLITICAL AFFAIRS

1. ON THE BRITISH AIRWAYS LONDON-ZAGREB FLIGHT YESTERDAY,  
DECEMBER 15, WHILE RETURNING FROM HOME LEAVE, I HAD THE OP-  
PORTUNITY TO SPEAK ABOUT YUGOSLAV CURRENT EVENTS WITH A MEMBER  
OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF CROATIA, A  
MAN I HAVE FOUND TO BE STRAIGHT, BUT DISCREET, WHEN TALKING  
ABOUT POLITICAL AFFAIRS. HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. HE SAID YUGOSLAWS WERE PLEASED ABOUT U.S. INTEREST IN  
YUGOSLAVIA AS EVINCED DURING THE RECENT PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.  
YUGOSLAVIA WHICH HAS STRUGGLED TO MAINTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE IN  
THE POST-WORLD WAR II PERIOD, WILL FIND WESTERN SUPPORT  
IMPORTANT FOR THE FUTURE.

B. THIS LATTER POINT SEEMED ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO HIM IN  
LIGHT OF THE NOVEMBER BREZHNEV-TITO TALKS. HE DESCRIBED THE  
MEETING AS "VERY DIFFICULT AND TOUGH." HE STATED THAT SOVIET  
REQUESTS FOR CONDITIONAL USE OF YUGOSLAV PORT FACILITIES HAD  
BEEN REJECTED. FURTHERMORE, HE SAID THAT THE DIFFERENCES  
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BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND THE SOVIET UNION ARE SO DEEP AS TO BE  
VIRTUALLY IRRECONCILABLE.

C. HE SAID THAT KARDELJ IS ACTIVE AND IN RELATIVELY GOOD HEALTH.  
HE PREDICTED THAT KARDELJ WILL BE SEEN TO BE INCREASINGLY ACTIVE  
IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

D. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SECRETARY OF THE LCY STANE DOLANC AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER JURE BILIC WHICH HE IMPLIED WERE ON DOMESTIC ISSUES. HE DESCRIBED BILIC'S FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS INsofar AS DEALING WITH THE SOVIET UNION AS "THE SAME AS TITO'S."

E. HE DESCRIBED BAKARIC'S HEALTH "POORER" THAN IT HAD BEEN SIX MONTHS AGO. (NOTE: THIS WOULD MAKE IT PRETTY BAD.) HE SPECULATED THAT MILKA PLANINC, PRESIDENT OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF CROATIA, IS LIKELY TO SUCCEED BAKARIC AS CROATIA'S NUMBER ONE FIGURE.

F. HE ANTICIPATED CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT OF YUGOSLAV POLITICAL

FIGURES DURING 1977 IN ANTICIPATION OF THE PARTY CONGRESS IN 1978. IN THIS REGARD, HE EXPECTS MIKA SPILJAK, PRESIDENT OF THE YUGOSLAV TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION, TO RETURN FROM BELGRADE TO ZAGREB TO PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN CROATIA, AND FOR MILUTIN BALTIC, PRESIDENT OF THE CROATIAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION, TO BE TRANSFERRED TO A POSITION OF LESSER IMPORTANCE.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH CIRCUMSPECT IN WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT YUGOSLAV INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS, ESPECIALLY WHTAN SPEAKING ABOUT INDIVIDUALS, THIS MAN, WHO IS PRO-WEST, HAS IN THE PAST BEEN CONSISTENTLY STRAIGHT-FORWARD IN EXPRESSING HIS POLITICAL VIEWS TO ME. ASIDE FROM THE OBVIOUS IMPORTANCE OF THE REPORTED DEPTH OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE USSR AND YUGOSLAVIA, I FIND ALSO SIGNIFICANT HIS ANTICIPATION OF INTERNAL POLITICAL MOVEMENT NEXT YEAR, FOLLOWING WHAT HAS BEEN A PERIOD OF RELATIVE STAGNATION. CONFIDENTIAL

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KAISER

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